

Board of Management Attendance

&

Self Evaluation of Effectiveness AY 2024/25



Board of Management
25 September 2025

Hilary Denholm, Board Governance Adviser
ayrshirecollegeboardoffice@ayrshire.ac.uk

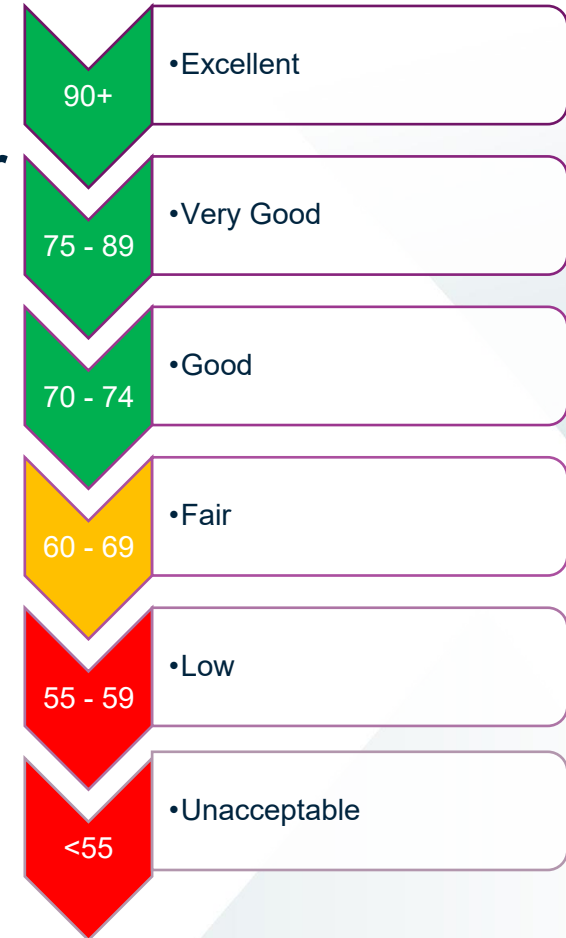
Measurement criteria for attendance

“Excellent” to “Unacceptable” six-point scale <55 to 90+

90% attendance benchmark and key performance indicator

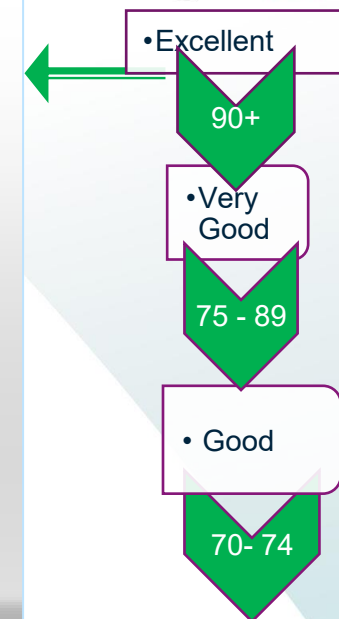
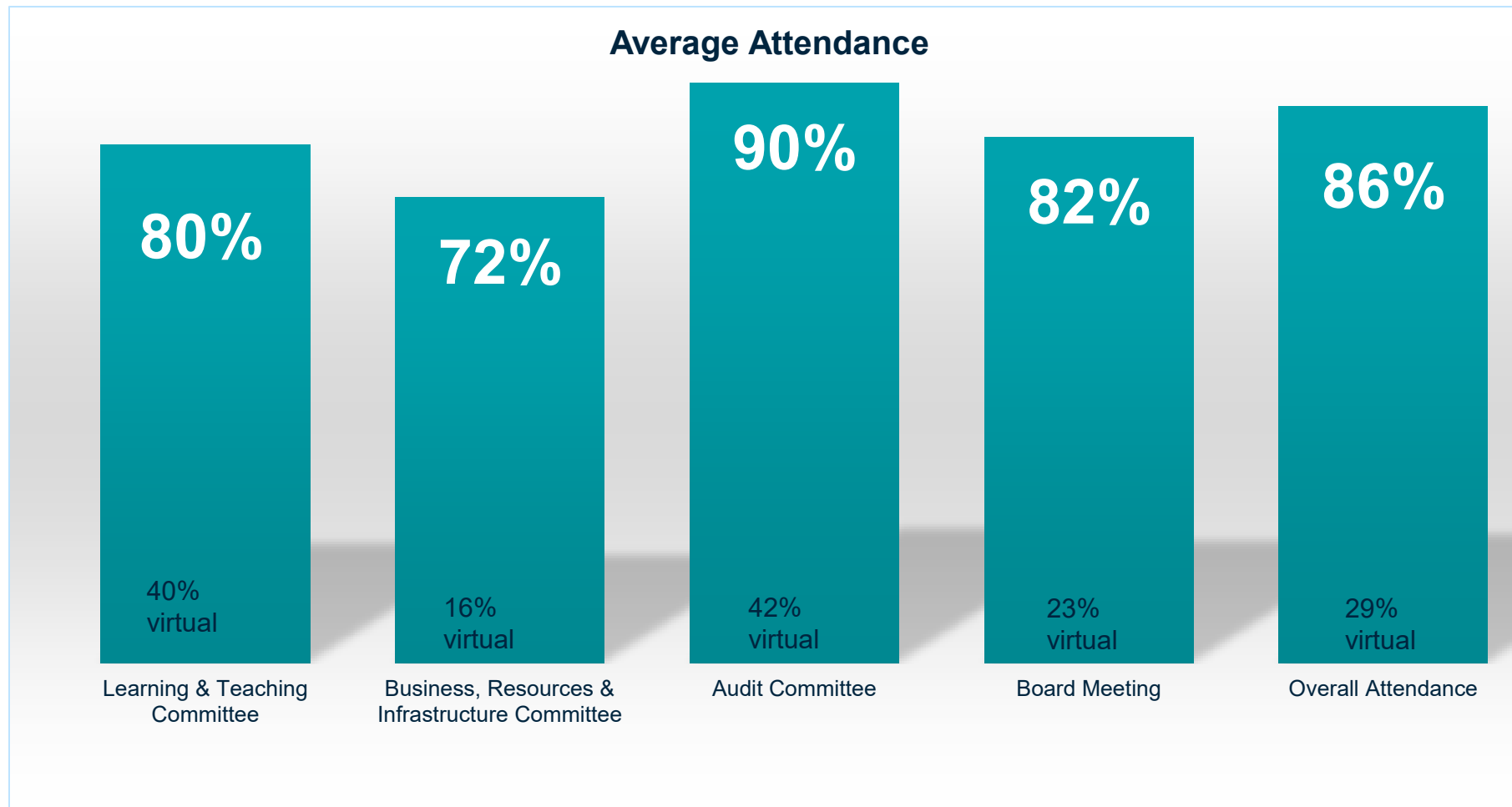
≥ 70% average attendance considered to be acceptable.

<70% average attendance considered to be less than acceptable and would normally be subject to review and opportunities for improvement explored.



Our Values: **Open and Honest** | **Innovative** | **Respectful** | **Supportive**

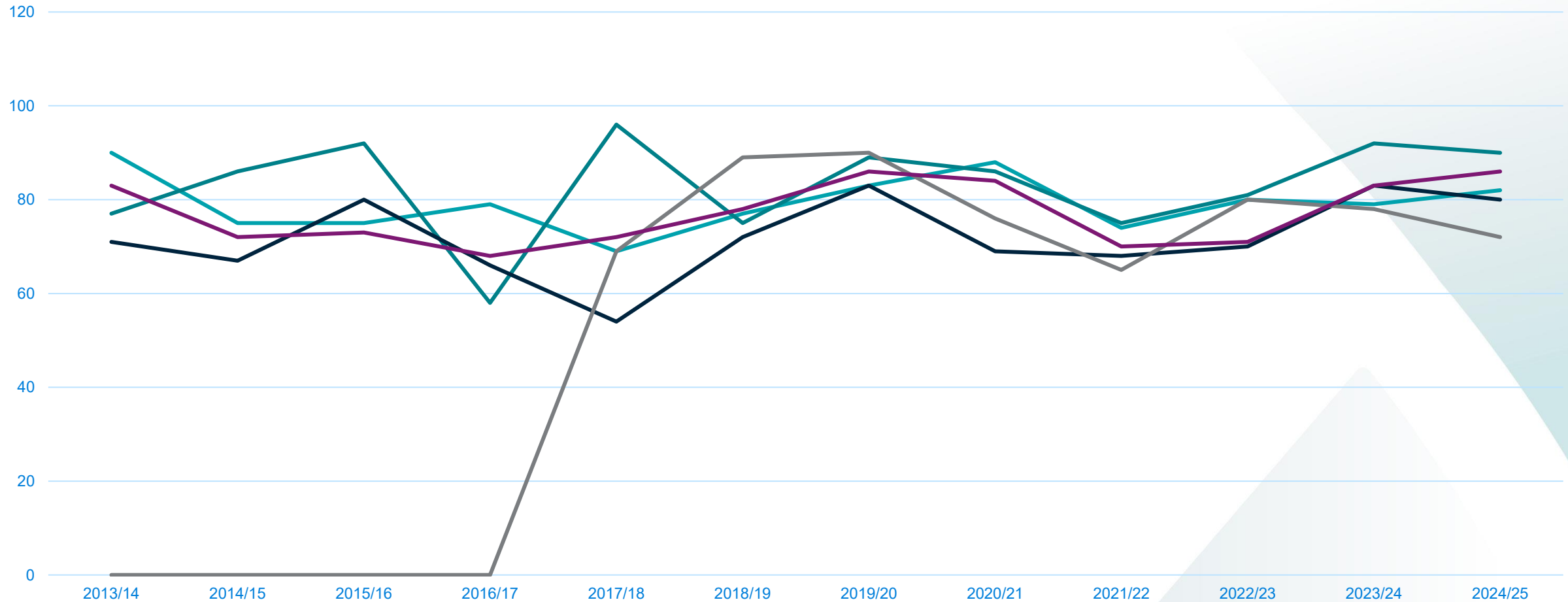
Board and Committee Attendance: 2024/25 overview



Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

Board & Committee Attendance: 2013/14 to 2024/25

% Attendance



Our Values: **Open and Honest** | **Innovative** | **Respectful** | **Supportive**

Board and Committee Attendance: Key points

- Every meeting attendance level achieved over 70% (good)
- 86% Overall Total attendance was achieved (KPI 90%)
- Virtual attendance assists overall meeting attendance levels
- Flexibility of hybrid attendance helpful – is quality of discussion affected?
- Student voice input maintained across Board & Committee level
- All existing board members overall attendance above 70% except one
- Attendance & committee membership is discussed as part of annual reviews
- Committee membership can be adjusted to assist where issues identified, or vacancies highlighted, or development requested
- Committee membership takes into account Skills Matrix and DiSC profiles

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

**Board of Management
Self Evaluation of Effectiveness
AY 2024/25**

Self Evaluation Of Effectiveness - Requirement

The Board of Management is required under the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges (section D.24) to:

- Undertake an annual self-evaluation of its performance and effectiveness against its overall duties and responsibilities.
- Commission an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness every 3-5 yrs. (College commissioned external reviews in 2021 & 2024)
- Submit the self-evaluation report & Board Development Plan (including progress on the previous years' plan) to the funding body & publish on-line.
- Compliance with the Code is a condition of grant award by SFC.

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

Self Evaluation of Effectiveness - Method

Self Evaluation of the activities of the Board of Management by each Board member individually, structured around the Code of Good Governance which provides direction on the key principles of governance, under the headings of:

- A. Leadership and Strategy**
- B. Quality of the Student Experience**
- C. Accountability**
- D. Effectiveness**
- E. Relationships and Collaboration**

Self Evaluation report helps indicates areas of strength and of future development for the Board.

- Self- Evaluation Questionnaire created in Forms
- Link emailed to Board Members on 27 May
- Completion by 10 June 25 latest
- Scoring scale 1 to 6 (1 low = disagree to 6 high = agrees)
- Comments & Feedback
- Follow up
- Review
- Summarise
- Report results

Self Evaluation of Effectiveness – Summary Results

- 12 from 17 members (over 50%) completed following reminder sent 19 June 2025.
- Average completion time 12 minutes.
- High Overall Scores: Most numeric responses have a mean score above 5.5, with medians consistently at 6, indicating strong agreement across most evaluation areas.
- Highest Score areas:
 - (5.92) Student Association Reports, Governance Support, Board accountability.
- Lowest Score areas:
 - (5.33) Learning provision is relevant to industry needs.
 - (5.42) The Board sets challenging student success targets.
 - (5.50) The Board prioritises the fair & effective management of staff.

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

A: Leadership and Strategy Q1-5

1. The Board has set out clear strategic priorities and aims (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.83

Average Rating

3. The strategic objectives and priorities of the College are aligned with regional strategy/outcomes = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.67

Average Rating

4. The Board undertakes regular strategic reviews/ scenario planning (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.58

Average Rating

Level 6

Level 5

Level 4

2. The Board regularly reviews performance against the strategic aims (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.67

Average Rating

5. Comments/Evidence:

Regular sessions where input is welcomed and valued. Continual updates and progress reports are available.

Board meetings - behaviours and papers as evidence Ensuring the board has the right mix of skills and experience - regular review and targeted recruitment

I think our approach to setting clear strategic aim and objectives, aligns clearly with the requirements of local and national policy and indeed aligns to the needs of employers and students.

I am satisfied we carry out these duties to a high standard

The reports we receive are timely, detailed, and support effective analysis and discussion. Guest speakers have added real value, aligning with strategic priorities. The use of Copilot for summarising has been helpful. Further improvement could come from routinely including executive summaries to aid accessibility.

The strategic objectives are covered in the committee structure and board of management meetings. I feel this governance structure is adequate

Performance review of Strategic Aims is good but i think would be even better with a different approach to reporting. Less dense papers, more Performance Measures

A: Leadership and Strategy Q6-9

6. Corporate Social Responsibility

The Board understands and demonstrates the College Values (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.67
Average Rating

Le
Le
Le

5.83
Average Rating



5.83
Average Rating

7. The Board has a Code of Conduct to which it is committed in practice (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

9. Comments/Evidence:

Board meetings - behaviours displayed Board CPD events Code of conduct and other documents shared as part of induction

I believe as a board we actively support the values of the college and the principles of public life. Our code of conduct is clear and regularly reviewed.

This is evident through open and respectful discussions, high levels of integrity, and consistent self-reflection. Papers and presentations reflect these principles in action

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

B: Quality of Student Experience Q10-13

10. Student members are active at Board level
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.75
Average Rating

11. The Board receives regular reports from the Students' Association
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

12. The Board and its Committees prioritise the opinions/views of students
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.83
Average Rating

Level 6
Level 5
Level 4
Level 3

Level 6
Level 5
Level 4
Level 3

13. Comments/Evidence:

Student board members play a very active and positive role within the Board. Regular reports of their activities are well received

Board papers - SA report Board meetings - students are involved and listened to Student experience is a priority. Student Ambassador program

I think the student voice is central to what we do as a board. I believe we are supportive of our student colleagues who sit on the board and their SA reports are always first on the report agenda for LTQ and at board. They are a valuable part of the board at AC.

Board have an excellent relationship with the Student Association and their input and views are prioritised through Board meetings and Committees

B: Quality of Student Experience Q14- 17

14. Learning and Teaching/Student Support

Learning and Teaching Performance is overseen effectively
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.58

Average Rating

15. The Board sets challenging student success targets
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.42

Average Rating

16. The student experience is central to Board decision-making
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.75

Average Rating

17. Comments/Evidence:

Constant monitoring and evaluation is taken, including challenging decisions

Board papers - SA report Student experience is a priority. Student Ambassador program. Feedback informs decision making

I think we have developed our challenge of student success targets over the past few years. We have greater expectations of our L&T performance. I believe we are driven to ensure our students get support and challenge in their learning and experiences at the college to continually improve student results and success

Q14 - student performance (PIs) is measured in detail however the actual Learning and Teaching performance (assuming this is referring to pedagogy) is not examined in great detail at Board Level, although there are regular updates on initiatives and operational developments with digital and classroom pedagogy. Perhaps I have misunderstood this question. Q15 - I feel this question is an usual one as I feel student success targets are primarily decided by SFC and not the Board of Management.

C: Accountability Q18-24

18. The Board recognises its chain of accountability (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

19. The Board is open in its decision-making and facilitates disclosure (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

20. The Board delegates responsibilities to appropriate committees (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

21. The Board has in place an effective risk management strategy (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

22. The College's audit processes are comprehensive and rigorous (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

23. The Board publishes high quality Annual Reports (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.83
Average Rating

24. Comments/Evidence:

The degree of rigour is unparalleled with other organisations I have been involved in. I am very confident that risk is managed comprehensively and full reports are available regularly

Board meetings ARC committee papers Information from Alan Ritchie Risk Register

I've seen real positive progress in our risk management processes and feel very assured by the robustness of our policies and processes. We have demonstrated really good internal and external audit results and this is due to the dedication and commitment of our executive and management teams

Changes to the Risk Assessment have been particularly useful. I feel the Board is very rigorous in these processes all round

C: Accountability Q25-29

29. Comments/Evidence:

Staff survey Staff Voice Well-being group for staff Board induction makes responsibilities clear

We have excellent governance processes in place and these have developed further over the past two years. There is transparency and good processes in place, including a great induction program to ensure board members understand the governance processes

Q28 - There are areas of staff wellbeing initiatives that work extremely well and the college aims to look after their staff but I have to highlight that Curriculum staff are very much under the most pressure they have been due to demographic of student pressures, support needs and health and mental health conditions of students.

Professional Services Staff are also highly pressured and trying to cope with rising demands of support required and although there are always steps taken operationally, and at Board there is an awareness of these rising demands and that the college try and ensure resources are adequate, I would not say that I have felt this directly falls to Board for discussion in any detail - the general fair and effective management of staff

25. Remuneration, Sustainability, Staff Governance

There is a formal process for setting the Principal's remuneration (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)



26. Funds are planned and used economically, efficiently, and effectively (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.67

Average Rating

5.58

Average Rating

Level 6

Level 5

Level 4

27. Board members are aware of their responsibilities as charity trustees (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

28. The Board prioritises the fair and effective management of staff (scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree) (0 point)

5.92

Average Rating

5.50

Average Rating

Level 6

Level 5

Level 4

D: Effectiveness Q30-35

30. The Board Chair promotes open discussion on strategic matters
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.75
Average Rating

Level 1
Level 2
Level 3

32. The Principal and Executive Team are clearly accountable to the Board
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.83
Average Rating

33. The Board is well supported and guided in matters of governance
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.92
Average Rating

Level 6
Level 5
Level 4
Level 3

31. The Board has an appropriate mix of skills and works well as a team
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.67
Average Rating

Level 6 ■
Level 5 ■
Level 4
Level 3

34. The Board is provided with information that is relevant, and of suitable format, frequency and time to enable effective strategic decision making?
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.67
Average Rating

Level 6 9
Level 5 2
Level 4 1

35. Comments/Evidence:

the Governance arrangements are exceptional. Hilary Denholm is an incredible support to the Board. She, particularly, is to be commended for the work she does.

Board meetings and papers Boardroom behaviours

I think the open discussions we've had as a board have really supported the board to challenge and receive assurance from the executive team. These ad hoc sessions we have had offer greater engagement and an opportunity for the board members to seek assurance. Hopefully the executive find that the board can provide a sounding board as well as experience and skills to particularly challenging issues.

There is a wide range of expertise on Board and I feel changes in members has brought a new dynamic to Board meetings where I feel members try to seek a full understanding and question or challenge where they feel it is appropriate.

As previous commented, less dense board reporting would support more focus on future scenario planning and strategic decision making

D: Effectiveness Q36-39

36. Board member development and evaluation

Board recruitment is open and in line with ministerial guidance
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.83

Average Rating

37. There are sufficient opportunities for Board induction and development
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.83

Average Rating

38. Board effectiveness is regularly reviewed using a variety of methods
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.67

Average Rating

Level 6 

Level 5 

Level 4 

Level 3 

39. Comments/Evidence:

Regular board and committee self-evaluations and act on findings. Ongoing training and development for board members. Decision-making processes are evidence-based and inclusive

Good recruitment processes are in place which align with the HR processes of the college. There are opportunities to be involved in development days and also board members are encouraged to provide topic ideas for these development days too.

E: Relationships and Collaboration Q40-44

40. The Board ensures effective communication with stakeholders
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.58
Average Rating

41. Learning provision is relevant to industry needs
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)




5.33
Average Rating

42. The College engages well with stakeholders/industry partners
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.67
Average Rating

43. The Board supports the delivery of the Regional Outcome Agreement
(scale of 1 to 6, low = disagree, high = agree)
(0 point)

5.67
Average Rating

Level 6 
Level 5 
Level 4 

44. Comments/Evidence:

Strong partnerships with employers, local authorities, and community organisations. Effective dialogue with trade unions and staff representatives. Promote and support the work of the Student Association. Open communication and engagement with stakeholders, including government bodies and the public

Our learning provision is continually being reviewed to ensure that we can meet the needs of industry. There are challenges around how we can provide these learning opportunities due to our restricted funds such as MA

I think Ayrshire College has an excellent reputation and this is due to the hard work at all levels of the college to foster good relationships with all stakeholders and the effort everyone puts in to keep these relationships strong

It has been challenging to secure the attendance of suitable external stakeholders at Board Development Sessions

Q 45: What are the key issues that you feel need to be addressed by the Board for the future?

Financial pressures - how can we impact funding crisis Private income vs learning and teaching Staff retention

Our sustainability and our need to continually evolve to meet the needs of industry and our students

Perhaps looking closer at Learning and Teaching practices (however I know this is in progress with the new Great Conversations developments and Elevate staff Learning and Development portals) and looking closer at staff wellbeing.

Plan for continued real-terms funding pressure by strengthening scenario planning, exploring alternative income streams, and monitoring in-year cash flow more rigorously. Where possible tackle cost-of-living barriers, expand mental-health support, and close attainment gaps for care-experienced, SIMD 1-2, and other under-represented groups.

The election in 2026 will be key in allocation of funds. Positioning the college will be key in ensuring relevance and alignment with Scottish government priorities whilst playing back the local needs of Ayrshire

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

Self Evaluation of Effectiveness – Discussion Points to help address areas for improvement

1. How does the Board set & measure challenging student success targets? Should we request a management review to revise the student success targets to ensure they are challenging yet achievable? Do management need to set more specific and measurable goals, or provide additional support to students?
2. How can the Board demonstrate that it does prioritise the fair & effective management of staff? Are there additional policies requiring implementation to promote staff well-being, professional development opportunities, and transparent communication between management and staff?
3. What information does the Board require to ensure that the Learning provision is relevant to industry needs? How is this measured? Do management consult with industry experts, conduct surveys with employers, and review current curriculum offerings to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

Next steps – Board Development Plan

1. Incorporate the feedback from the 24-25 Board Self-Evaluation questionnaire.
2. Incorporate suggestions/training needs from the Annual Appraisal discussions with the Chair, and the Principal.
3. Incorporate suggestions/ideas/development needs from ongoing discussions and development days.
4. Incorporate any relevant ideas/suggestions from the Board sub-group committees and Board meetings.
5. Align with Assurance & Governance mapping.
6. Align with our Strategic Ambition 2024-2027, our Strategic Objectives (Outstanding Experiences, Partner of Choice & Enabling the Future), our Values & The Ayrshire Way.
7. Submit Board Development Plan to Board for approval every year.
8. Update Board Development Plan every quarter.

Our Values: Open and Honest | Innovative | Respectful | Supportive

